

ATHENS REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES Minutes of January 18, 2024 Meeting

Oconee County

Library Meeting Room, 3:30 pm

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Chair Campbell. Present were Ms. Terrell, Ms. Norris, Mr. Lutz, Mr. Campbell, Ms. Russell, Mr. Woods, Mr. Mason, Ms. Shoemaker, Ms. Quick, Mr. Garner, Ms. Frey, and Ms. Ross. Absent was Ms. Morris.

Staff present were Ms. Bell, Ms. Price, Ms. Calia, Ms. Josey, Ms. Obijuru, Ms. Mayfield, Ms. Shull, Ms. Plaksin, Ms. Schuman, and Ms. Hood.

Recognitions and Resolutions - Chair Campbell took the opportunity to thank the Regional Board members for their time and service.

The Draft Minutes of the October 19, 2023 meeting were unanimously approved. (motioned by Mr. Lutz, seconded by Ms. Russell)

The January 18, 2024 agenda was unanimously adopted with the following amendment: Strike item 11d, approval to charter bus for Library Legislative Day. (motioned by Mr. Garner, seconded by Ms. Ross)

Public Comment - Several community members signed up for public comment. Each person was given up to 3 minutes to address the Board. Community members expressed concerns regarding book banning, the use of a Citizens Advisory Council, and several people expressed their gratitude for library services and workers.

The following community members signed up for public comment: Laura Rose of Oconee, Lisa Donovan of Clarke, Dan Matthews of Oconee, Rita Kelly of Clarke, Pat Peterson of Clarke, Richard Daniels of Clarke, KathyLynn Sanderson of Clarke, Lisa Menoe of Clarke, Mark Evans of Clarke, Patrick Conley of Clarke, Andrea Willnite of Oconee, Tina Mills of Clarke, Mark VanAllen of Oconee, Glenn Leavell of Clarke, Sara Baugh of Clarke, Lisa Freeman of Clarke, Kris Irwin, of Madison, Will Whatley of Oconee, and Allison Unsworth of Oconee.

Financial Report:

Financial Report FY2024-Q2 was unanimously accepted. (motioned by Mr. Lutz, seconded by Ms. Russell)

Regional Reports

Athens-Clarke County:

Ms. Russell gave the report. The Friends of the Library book sale is coming in March. The Winterville Branch chess program is going very well and is popular among patrons. The repairs to the library flooring are underway. The staff is gathering stories for Love Your Library Month.

Franklin County:

Ms. Shoemaker gave the report. She reported that the Lavonia Branch was closed

for 6 weeks for repairs due to a car accident that caused extensive damage to the wiring of the building. Circulation and patron numbers are down due to the closure, but programming is going well now that the library is open. They are working to rebuild the relationship with the Board of Education, and recently met with the superintendent. In the near future, they will meet to discuss funding. Lastly, Ms. Shoemaker reported that the library recently welcomed a new Children's Specialist.

Madison County:

Ms. Ross gave the report. The Madison County Library was the recipient of 2 large monetary gifts. The Board is looking into investing the funds. The Board and staff have started discussions about the PLAY Card. Ms. Ross will provide updates as needed. She was happy to report that all numbers are up and programming is going very well.

Oconee County:

Mr. Campbell gave the report. He reported that the Watkinsville Branch has closed as they prepare for the move to Wire Park. Staff and everyone involved in the transition is working really hard. The Bogart Branch is very busy during this time. The new Oconee Branch at Wire Park will be opening soon and he is very excited. Mr. Campbell will provide updates as needed.

Oglethorpe:

Mr. Garner gave the report. He was pleased to report that the Oglethorpe Friends are very active and successful. They have reached out to the business community for support. The library's Spooky Week was a success. The children really enjoyed the activities including a drive thru trunk or treat. Programming is going very well. Patrons enjoyed a variety of Christmas programs. The library hosted Lunch and Learns and Afternoon Unwinds. He was pleased to report partnership with the local school system, and Rotary Club.

Director's Report:

Director Bell gave the report. She began with an ADP update. Ms Bell thanked Business Manager, Lorrie Lavengood and Assistant Director, Sue Plaksin for their hard work. Ms. Lavengood handled the accounting aspect, while Ms. Plaksin managed the Human Resources side. The conversion was challenging. Ms. Bell was happy to report that ADP successfully processed the November and December payroll. Once again, she thanked the team for their dedication throughout the process.

Moving forward, the focus is on transitioning to a paperless timekeeping system. The team is currently planning this transition and have selected staff members who will be responsible for training others on the new system.

Ms. Bell took this opportunity to revise the pay schedule for part-time staff. She was pleased to announce that part time staff will now be paid bi-weekly instead of monthly, while salaried staff will remain on a monthly pay schedule. She and the former Business Manager had been trying to achieve this for quite some time. The trustees received the ARLS Strategic Activity Plan. Ms. Price has organized the activities into a KanBan tool that the Resource Team will use to monitor and track progress.

Ms. Bell thanked Collections Manager, Lindsay Josey and the entire Collections Department for their hard work and dedication in bringing Hoopla to the library.

Hoopla is a streaming service available to library card holders that allows patrons access to movies, television series, music, audiobooks, and more. As of now, we have 645 registered patrons, and 481 active users. Hoopla is quite popular with over 1,714 items circulated so far. Ms. Bell also thanked Ms. Josey and all staff members who worked hard to process the Requests for Reconsideration the System has received over the past quarter.

Ms. Bell was pleased to report another successful Staff Development Day. She thanked co-chairs Nike' Shimobi-Obijuru and Ashley Shull for all their hard work, as well as staff across the region who contributed to making the day a great success. The Oconee County Library Staff won the Most Valuable Team award. Jessica Simpson from Oconee County Library won the Staff of Distinction award. Georgia Libraries Legislative Day has not yet been announced. Former Director Kathy Ames will be honored with the Georgia Public Library Service Lifetime Achievement Award. This information is not public knowledge at this time so please do not share until GPLS has made the announcement. Ms. Bell invited everyone to attend, and will share the date with the Board as soon as it is announced. New Board member orientation will be held in March. The exact date will be shared as soon as it is set.

Director Bell informed the Board of the new State Mileage fees. Trustees received a chart outlining the fees for staff travel. **(Action Item)** Trustees were invited to the soft opening at the new Oconee County Library at Wire Park on February 3rd at 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Bell stated that the ARLS collection is being debated in several counties. She informed the Board that our selectors have a policy in place for materials being included in our collections that includes award winning books, and books of high interest. She stated that it is very important that our libraries are a welcoming place for everyone. Ms. Bell has arranged to meet with selectors, and the collection management team to discuss ways to provide access to library materials. The Board will be updated at the next regional meeting.

Finally, trustees were presented with an updated Patron Responsibilities & Conduct Policy, as well as an updated Banning Policy for review. **(Action Item)**

Committee Reports:

Finance - None.

Policy – Ms. Shoemaker stated that the Policy Committee has reviewed the Patron Behavior Policy and the Banning Policy, and recommends that the policy goes before the Board.

Board members discussed the policy. Ms. Ross expressed concern regarding not having the banning matrix available for context.

Trustees reached a unanimous decision to postpone the approval of the updated Patron Responsibilities & Conduct Policy. The decision was made to table it until the next quarterly meeting, where the banning matrix will be available for review.

(Action Item)

Personnel – None

Nominating - None

Old Business: None

New Business:

- a. Approval to meet regularly with the Finance Committee and the Executive Board to discuss budgeting and finance procedures - Unanimously approved. (motioned by Ms. Norris, seconded by Ms. Quick)
- b. Approval of state mileage fees (see chart) - Unanimously approved. (motioned by Ms. Quick, seconded by Mr. Lutz)
- c. Approval of the updated Patron Responsibilities & Conduct Policy - Tabled. Unanimously agreed. (motioned by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Garner)
- d. An amendment to add the following new business to the agenda was made and unanimously approved:
Approval of the Banning Policy - Unanimously approved. (motioned by Ms. Norris, seconded by Ms. Quick)

Announcements: None

Adjourn: With no further business, Chair Campbell called for adjournment at 5:04 p.m.

Unanimously approved without opposition.

Next Meeting April 18, 2024 at 3:30 pm.

Madison County Library

Board Actions

- **Approval to meet regularly with the Finance Committee and the Executive Board to discuss our budgeting and finance procedures - Unanimously approved**
- **Approval of state mileage fees (see chart) - Unanimously approved**
- **Approval of the updated Patron Behavior Policy - Tabled**
- **Approval of the Banning Policy - Unanimously approved**